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# STATISTICAL SUMMARY

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS, U. S. D. A.

WASHINGTON, D. C.



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## March Weather Slows Crops

Cool, wet weather in March over most of the Nation's farming area slowed farm work and progress of crops. The delay offset earlier advancement in the Pacific Northwest and a little backwardness was noted in most of the rest of the country except in the Atlantic States.

## Situation Not Serious in Most Sections

The situation, however, was not regarded serious in most sections . . . Favorable weather in early April already may have brought a large measure of recovery. But to April 1 spring seeding in most of the central part of the country had not made the usual progress. This may mean some shifting of acreage to later crops in Kansas, Missouri, Kentucky, and States southward.

## Winter Wheat Estimate Down

Winter wheat crop, now estimated at 727 million bushels, is 173 million less than was forecast in December. Winter wheat harvest last year totaled 751 million; 10-year average, 792 million. Over 23 percent of the seeded acreage is expected to be abandoned, compared with 17 percent last year and 10 percent average.

## Wheat Situation Varies As Between Regions

Heavy abandonment of winter wheat and reduced yield prospects are due largely to continued dry weather in the wheat areas of the Central and Southern Great Plains, also to damage by aphids and cutworms. In the northern Great Plains, wheat is in satisfactory condition, though slow to start growth. In the East North Central region, early sown fields show good prospects but late sown fields have suffered from "heaving". In the Pacific Northwest, damage appears to be confined to spots lacking snow cover last winter. Wheat in the South survived the severe winter better than expected, but is short and appears slow to start growth.

## Rainfall Light in Great Plains and West

Precipitation last month was moderate to heavy in the eastern half of the country; light in most of the Great Plains and the West. Irrigation water, plentiful in northern areas tapered to extremely short in the southern Rockies.

## Pasture Condition Same as Last Year

Pasture condition, at 80 percent, is same as a year ago and 2 points below average. Pastures generally slow to start, increased the need for hay and concentrate feeds. Growth poor in much of the South, also in the dry Southwest. Western range feed condition 4 points below average. Stock wintered in good condition, except in the dry areas.

## Farm Wheat Stocks Now 217 Million Bushels

Wheat Stocks on farms (April 1) total 217.3 million bushels. This compares with 199.2 million year ago and 10-year average of 222.6 million. Disappearance January through March was 118.4 million bushels compared with 127.8 million year earlier and 10-year average for the same quarter of 145.4 million.

## Nearly Half of Corn Crop Still on Farms

Corn on farms totals 1.4 billion bushels compared with 1.6 billion year earlier and 1.2 billion 10-year average. Nearly 48 percent of last year's crop is still on farms. Disappearance January-March quarter was 807

million bushels compared with 769 million year earlier and the average disappearance of 759 million bushels.

## Other Grain Stocks on Farms April 1

Oats .....559.7 million bushels; year ago, 484.7 million; 10-year average, 467.8 million.  
Barley.....88.9 million bushels; year ago, 69.9 million; average, 82.3 million.  
Rye.....4.2 million bushels; year ago, 3.3 million; average, 4.8 million.  
Soybeans....46.1 million bushels; year ago, 45.8 million; average, 37.4 million bushels.

## Early Feed-Grain Estimates Short of Indicated Needs

Based on March planting intentions, and average yields, feed grain production would be nearly a fifth larger than in the period before World War II. But the estimated 118 million tons would be about 6 percent smaller than last year. Current requirements, estimated at 132 million, would reach deeper into carryover stocks. Changes in farmers' acreage plans, plus good planting weather, could improve the prospects.

## Milk Production Near Record

The 9.7 billion pounds of milk produced on farms in March is only 3 percent below the record high for the month reached in 1950, and tops the March 10-year average by 2 percent. Liberal grain feeding offset less favorable production weather to hold production per cow at a high level. Production lower on per capita basis.

## Eggs Produced Close to Output Year Ago

Farm flocks laid 6.3 billion eggs in March, 5 percent above the 1940-49 average but down a little from the 6.5 billion produced in March a year ago. A 3-percent decrease in layers from last year more than offset a slight increase in the rate of lay.

## PARITY PRICES FOR FARM PRODUCTS AND ACTUAL PRICES RECEIVED

COMMODITY AND UNIT	ACTUAL PRICE		PARITY PRICE
	Feb. 15 1951	Mar. 15 1951	Mar. 15 1951
Wheat, bu. ....dol.	2.21	2.12	2.40
Corn, bu. ....dol.	1.60	1.60	1.74
Peanuts, lb. ....ct.	10.9	10.8	13.0
Cotton, lb. ....ct.	41.75	42.73	33.60
Potatoes, bu. ....dol.	1.03	1.07	1.79
Hogs, 100 lb. ....dol.	22.00	21.20	21.20
Beef cattle, 100 lb. ....dol.	29.00	29.70	19.70
Veal calves, 100 lb. ....dol.	33.30	33.50	22.10
Lambs, 100 lb. ....dol.	33.30	35.00	21.60
Butterfat, lb. ....ct.	1/ 68.6	1/ 68.7	76.2
Milk, whsle., 100 lb. ....dol.	1/ 4.52	1/ 4.58	4.76
Chickens, live, lb. ....ct.	26.9	28.9	31.1
Eggs, doz. ....ct.	1/ 46.5	1/ 50.2	52.5

1/ Adjusted for seasonal variation.

2/ Preliminary.



### Big Production in North Atlantic States

In the North Atlantic States March egg production was 5 percent above a year ago and reached record high. In other regions output was below a year ago.

### Fewer Hens and Young Chickens Than Year Ago

U. S. farm flocks averaged 373.2 million layers in March compared with 382.8 million year ago. Chicks and young chickens of this year's hatching are estimated at 210.8 million—down 7 percent from a year ago, but 9 percent above the average. Number of layers were down from last year in all parts of the country, except the North Atlantic where there was an increase of 3 percent.

### Feeding More Favorable for Chickens and Eggs

Egg-feed and chicken-feed price ratios in March were more favorable than a year ago. Poultry ration cost \$4.00 (100 pounds) compared with \$3.40 year ago, but eggs brought 43.7 cents dozen compared with 31.6 cents year earlier. Liveweight chickens averaged 28.9 cents pound compared with 23.8 cents year earlier.

### Moderately Larger Meat Supplies This Year

Moderately more meat will be produced this year than last, present prospects indicate. More meat animals are on farms, particularly breeding stock. Large calf, pig, and lamb crops seem assured, barring unfavorable weather. The beef increase will come in the second half of the year when supplies of both fed and grass cattle are expected to be larger than a year earlier.

### More Meat Last Year From Canada and Argentina

Net imports of meat last year were larger than in '49, mainly fresh and frozen beef and veal from Canada and canned beef from Argentina. Larger imports in '51 will depend mainly on receipts of canned beef from South America, which last year reached all-time record.

### Fall Oats and Barley Damaged

Fall sown oats and barley suffered severe winter damage, leading to heavier than usual spring seeding. Damage and loss of acreage was especially severe in Oklahoma and Texas because of drought, freezing, and insects. In Kansas most of the spring oats and barley had been sown last year by April 1. This year less than two-thirds of the acreage had been sown.

### Rye Condition Off; Rice Seeding Delayed

Rye condition, at 83 percent, is slightly below last year, also below the average for the season. Rice seeding has made about the usual progress in Louisiana and Texas, but has been delayed in Arkansas.

### Early Potatoes, Above Average Condition

Condition of early potatoes in 10 Southern States and California is reported at 83 percent, 4 points above average. Only in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas is the condition below average.

### Fewer Spring Vegetables Indicated

Tonnage of spring vegetables for fresh market is expected to be sharply less than a year ago, but above average. Sharpest reductions are in early spring cabbage, early spring onions, carrots and celery. Crops larger than last year are lettuce, cucumbers and spinach.

### Below Average Peach Crop Indicated

A smaller than average U.S. peach crop is expected. Heavy freeze damage in the North Central States, though in the South the crop is expected to be much better than in the past 2 years. Outlook is particularly good in the Carolinas and Georgia.

### About Average Apple Crop

Apple prospects for the Nation are about average—above average in the East, below average in the West. The usual frost hazards of April and May were still to be faced.

### More Citrus Than Last Year

Orange crop estimated at 108.2 million boxes, tops last season by 6 percent and is 13 percent above average. Grapefruit at 44.2 million boxes is 21 percent above last season but 13 percent below average. California lemons, 12.5 million boxes, will be about 10 percent more than last season, down from average by 4 percent.

### 51 Million Boxes of Oranges Still For Harvest

Over 51 million boxes of oranges remained for harvest on April 1. Compares with a total of about 50 million boxes available year ago at this time.

### Over 11 Million Boxes of Grapefruit

Grapefruit remaining for use April 1 totals about 11 1/2 million boxes compared with 8 1/2 million year ago at this time.

### Farmers' Prices Down a Little Last Month

The index of prices received by farmers went down about 1 percent from mid-February to mid-March, the first decline since October. Sharp drops in many truck crops, moderate declines in food grains, dairy products and hogs were mainly responsible for the overall decline.

### Prices Paid By Farmers Continue Up

The index of prices farmers pay, including interest, taxes and wage rates, again set a new record in mid-March with a rise of 1 1/2 percent over mid-February.

### Farmers' Income Down 27 Percent in 3 Years

Farmers' realized net income in 1950, estimated at 13 billion dollars, was down 27 percent from the record high of \$17.8 billion reached in '47. Since prices farmers paid were higher in '50 than in '47, the purchasing power of farmers' net income last year was down 30 percent from 3 years earlier.

### Farmers' Receipts Up Again This Year

During the first quarter of 1951, farmers cash receipts from marketings were up 16 percent from the same period in 1950. First-quarter receipts this year totaled about 6.4 billion dollars.

### Over 60 Million Civilians at Work

U. S. civilians at work in March totaled 60.2 million, compared with 58.9 in February and 57.6 year ago. Unemployed is down to 2.1 million. Compares with 4.1 million year ago.

### CURRENT INDEXES FOR AGRICULTURE

INDEX NUMBERS	BASE PERIOD	March 1951
Prices received by farmers....	'10-14=100	311
Prices paid by farmers, interest, taxes & farm wage rates.	'10-14=100	280
Parity ratio.....	'10-14=100	111
Wholesale prices of food.....	'10-14=100	1/ 291
Retail prices of food.....	'10-14=100	2/ 292
Farm wage rates.....	'10-14=100	3/ 479
Weekly factory earnings.....	'10-14=100	2/ 558
PRODUCTION COMPARISONS	Jan.-Mar. 1950	Jan.-Mar. 1951
Milk, (bil. lb.).....	27.8	27.2
Eggs, (bil.).....	16.9	16.6
Beef, (dr. wt., mil. lb.).....	4/1,102	4/1,132
Lamb & mutton (dr. wt., mil. lb.)	4/ 94	4/ 86
Pork & lard (mil. lb.).....	4/1,858	4/2,008
All meats (dr. wt., mil. lb.)....	4/3,149	4/3,309
1/ Week ended nearest 15th of the month.		
2/ February figure.		
3/ April 1 adjusted for seasonal variation.		
4/ Jan.-Feb. under Federal inspection.		